

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 NEAE-00 SAA-01
SSM-03 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03
NSAE-00 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 NSCE-00 SSO-00 ICAE-00
INRE-00 TRSE-00 OMB-01 ACDA-12 /100 W
-----062230 261245Z /45

O 261228Z JUL 78
FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1901
INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
AMCONSUL ALEXANDRIA
AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PARIS
USMISSION SINAI
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L CAIRO 17725

JERUSALEM FOR AMBASSADOR ATHERTON

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR PBOR EG IS US
SUBJECT: WHY GOE REJECTED BEGIN'S MESSAGE

REF: CAIRO 17674
SUMMARY. "HIGH-RANKING SOURCE" CONFIRMS FOR PRESS THAT
BEGIN MESSAGE REJECTED BECAUSE ITS CONTENTS
PREVIOUSLY LEAKED. AHRAH EDITOR SAYS REFUSAL ALSO
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BECAUSE OF EL ARISH TURNDOWN. LEADS FOLLOW-UP MEETING
"USELESS" UNLESS ISRAEL SHOWS READINESS TO NEGOTIATE.
EL ARISH CAPER PLAYED DOWN. RELIABLE JOURNALIST SAYS
SADAT "ASTONISHED" BY THIS TURNDOWN ON EL ARISH, "ANGRY"
OVER BEGIN'S MANNER OF REFUSAL, AND DISAPPOINTED HE
UNLIKELY TO PRAY AT SAINT CATHERINE'S ON OCTOBER 6.
END SUMMARY.

1. OFFICIAL EGYPTIAN SOURCE. JULY 26 AKHBAR REPORTS "HIGH-RANKING EGYPTIAN SOURCE" (ALMOST CERTAINLY OSAMA EL BAZ OR AHMAD MAHER) SAYING SADAT REFUSED BEGIN'S MESSAGE BECAUSE CONTENTS "LEAKED OUT" BEFORE IT RECEIVED. SOURCE EXPLAINED MESSAGE CONNECTED WITH QUESTION OF EL ARISH "ONLY" AND INDICATED ISRAEL CANNOT DO ANYTHING UNILATERALLY, BUT BELIEVED NEW EGYPTIAN-ISRAELI MEETING NECESSARY. SOURCE WENT ON TO SAY THAT EVEN IF U.S. AND ISRAEL WANT FOLLOW-UP TO LEEDS, EGYPT BELIEVES FURTHER TALKS WITHOUT NEW ISRAELI ELEMENT ARE "USELESS." AT LEEDS "ISRAEL DID NOT SHOW ANY READINESS TO NEGOTIATE."

2. EL ARISH AS SIDE ISSUE. SOURCE ALSO SAID SADAT SHOWED "DISAPPOINTMENT" AT "THEATRICAL STAND" WITH WHICH ISRAEL HANDLED QUESTION OF RESTORING EL ARISH, BUT PROPOSAL WAS "NOT OFFICIAL" AND EGYPT "WOULD NOT ATTACH MUCH IMPORTANCE TO IT." SOURCE CLAIMED ISRAEL WANTS "TO DRAG US TO SIDE ISSUES OF THIS KIND."

3. U.S. ROLE. SOURCE CONCLUDED THAT "IF VANCE INFORMS US ISRAELIS READY FOR SERIOUS TALKS, WE ARE READY, BUT SUCH AFFIRMATION MUST BE MADE ABOUT SOMETHING TANGIBLE." ARTICLE CONCLUDES BY CLAIMING AMBASSADOR EILTS SAID BEGIN'S MESSAGE TO SADAT WAS SENT THROUGH AMERICAN DIPLOMATS AND "THROUGH ANOTHER CHANNEL WHICH THE CONFIDENTIAL

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AMBASSADOR DID NOT SPECIFY."

4. AHARAM POLITICAL EDITOR. IN FRONT-PAGE STORY, AHARAM POLITICAL EDITOR "LEARNED" FORMIN KAMEL HAD INFORMED AMERICAN AMBASSADOR DAY BEFORE YESTERDAY THAT EGYPT REFUSED TO RECEIVE BEGIN'S MESSAGE BECAUSE: (A) BEGIN DECLARED IN THE KNESSET THAT HE WILL NOT RETURN ANY OCCUPIED LAND UNLESS HE OBTAINS SOMETHING IN RETURN, FORGETTING THAT THOSE LANDS ARE "OUR LANDS" AND THAT THIS IS "BLATANT" VIOLATION OF INTERNATIONAL LAW; AND (B) BEGIN ANNOUNCED CONTENTS OF MESSAGE AFTER CABINET MEETING "CONTRARY TO ALL DIPLOMATIC NORMS."

5. COMMENT. GOE HAS NOW CLARIFIED FOR PUBLIC CONSUMPTION THAT MAIN REASON FOR REJECTION OF MESSAGE WAS BEGIN'S PRIOR RELEASE OF ITS CONTENTS. AT SAME TIME, PRESS CLEARLY UNDER GUIDANCE TO PLAY DOWN EL ARISH CAPER. HOWEVER, RELIABLE JOURNALIST TELL US HE HAS LEARNED FROM SOURCES VERY CLOSE TO SADAT THAT PRESIDENT WAS ASTONISHED WITH TURNDOWN OF SUGGESTION HE FULLY EXPECTED TO BE ACCEPTED. SADAT ALSO SAID TO BE ANGRY OVER BEGIN'S MANNER OF REFUSAL ("SOMETHING FOR NOTHING")

AND PARTICULARLY DISAPPOINTED THAT HE UNLIKELY TO GET TO
PRAY AT SAINT CATHERINE'S ON OCTOBER 6. AS RESULT TURN-
DOWN, HE REPORTEDLY EVEN MORE DOWN ON BEGIN. EILTS

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Message Attributes

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Draft Date: 26 jul 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
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Disposition Approved on Date:
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Litigation History:
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TAGS: PEPR, PBOR, EG, IS, US
To: STATE
Type: TE
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